



MASTER FILE

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DSSD CENSUS 2000 PROCEDURES AND OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM SERIES # G-11

MEMORANDUM FOR Brian Monaghan
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Attention: Decennial Design
 Policy and Management Branch

Through: Howard Hogan *Howard Hogan*
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Subject: Observation of Block Canvassing-Wave 3, Field Operations in
 Long Beach, California; May 3-6, 1999

I. INTRODUCTION

I observed the field operations of the initial Block Canvassing in Long Beach, California, for two days. Although the Wave-3 is supposed to be completed by May 21, 1999, the Long Beach office completed most of their blocks before I arrived there on May 3, 1999. They kept two books for my observation.

II. OBSERVING THE BLOCK CANVASSER

The canvasser was honest and hard working. She had excellent communication skills. She knew how to talk to the people and get the information from the respondents. She was very organized and enthusiastic. The canvasser had all necessary materials with her while we were block canvassing. She greeted the respondent, introduced herself, explained the purpose of her visit, gave the Privacy Act document to the respondent, inquired about the relevant information to verify the address of the property, and asked questions about neighboring properties. She asked questions about additional living quarters. If any respondent did not understand any particular question, she rephrased it in a different way. The canvasser inquired about the living quarters at the visited address

and the addresses on either side. She followed clockwise canvassing as suggested in the Lister's Training. In summary, she followed the canvassing procedures properly. The canvasser canvassed every third housing unit.

III. OBSERVING THE FIELD OPERATIONS

I observed block canvassing of six blocks in a minority area. The blocks were large and were adjacent to each other.

The blocks I observed had many abandoned properties. Although there were addresses on the properties, it seemed that no one had lived on these properties for a long period of time. The canvasser confirmed most of the addresses of these properties by asking questions of the neighbors. In other cases, the canvasser used her judgement based on the surrounding information on the properties. For example, the canvasser looked for property number on the curve of the street, if any were assigned by the city. She also looked for the mail box, if any, with a property number on it. The canvasser told me that they were trained to look at the street curve or any other things on the property if the numbers of the properties were missing.

At several properties, the canvasser could not gain access because these houses had dogs and the main gate was locked. Some of these houses had a door bell but in many cases the residents of these houses did not open their gate. Most likely there was no one at home or the residents were reluctant to open the gate and talk to us.

In one block the canvasser had to delete an address and had to correct an address. In the Address Listing Book there was an address with 12 apartments, but we found only 11 apartments. At another property, the Address Listing Book showed apartments listed as A, B, and D, but instead of 'D' we found 'C'.

On another occasion, we found a property where there was no address in the Census Address Book. We added it to the add pages of the Address Listing Book.

The canvasser was trained to ask questions of the manager of a multi-unit structure if there were no residents in any of the units. The blocks we canvassed had many multi-unit structures and several business structures. However, we did not find any manager at any of the structures. Most structures are managed by real estate agents who live outside the structures. The addresses of these multi-unit structures were confirmed by neighbors or by visually inspecting the units by the canvasser.

At one home, the owner did not verify his address although there was an address listed on the front door of the house. He simply did not want to talk to us. We did not find any neighbor to verify the address. So, as usual, the canvasser used her common sense to verify the address.

In another case, we found a house which did not have any address listed either on the mail box, on the front gate, or on the street curve, although this house is listed in the Address Listing Book. The house looked like an abandoned property. We looked around and finally, we found the address on a trash can outside the back of the house.

In one situation, we found a garage of a house which is converted into a living quarters. It is located at the back of the house and cannot be seen from the street. We did not find any address listed for the converted living quarters, although there is a family not related to the main householder. The residents of the converted living quarters informed us that their mail is delivered by the postman to the mail box of the main house. We did not find any resident of the main house to verify their claims. So, the canvasser did not add the converted living quarters to the Address Listing Book. She told me that she would check with her crew leader.

There were also situations where the respondents were reluctant to verify the addresses of their neighbors' properties. In one case, the respondent did not know the addresses of her two neighbors. The canvasser verified the addresses of these properties by visually inspecting the properties.

IV. QUALITY ASSURANCE SAMPLES

The crew leader I talked to informed me that the dependent quality assurance samples were done correctly as specified in the "Crew Leader's Manual Supplement Block Canvassing." They received the training materials and forms in time. She did not have any problem with quality assurance samples and selecting two samples.

V. DISCUSSIONS WITH OTHERS

I also talked to the manager, a field operations supervisor, a crew leader, and a crew leader assistant. They all informed me that they did not have any problems hiring the block canvassers and providing them necessary training. The Crew Leader and Crew Leader Assistant observed the canvassers and verified their work. They retrained four canvassers after canvassers spent three days in the field. They completed their field operations before their allocated time period. However, there were instances where they had to remove two canvassers from their assignments. Otherwise, everything went smoothly.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

For minority dominated areas, if possible, send canvassers who know the major language for the area in addition to English.

For the purpose of confidentiality, if time and budget permit, go to every housing unit instead of every other third housing unit. Neighbors of a housing unit may not know whether their neighbor has an extra living quarters on the premise.

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